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#### ABSTRACT

A piston assembly for an internal combustion engine has at least a portion of a contact surface of the piston pin and/or connecting rod coated with a high hardness, lubricious coating. Some disclosed coatings include carbides, nitrides, oxynitrides, carbonitrides and sulfides of transition metals. Chromium  
5 nitride is one specifically disclosed coating material. Also disclosed are methods for preparing the coatings.